

This week's community profile: Anston



Down on the farm: John and Helen Tauscher look at some young stock at their Anston farm. They farm

about 750 acres, rent out about 300 more and own about 500 Holsteins.

Don't blink, you'll miss it

By Mary Colurso

Press-Gazette

Travelers taking a Sunday drive in the town of Pittsfield probably cruise right through Anston, admiring the scenery on County C or mooing at cows glimpsed from Anston Road.

They may sniff fresh country air, examine ramshackle farm houses and wonder, for a moment, what it's like to live in unspoiled countryside.

Press-Gazette photos by John Roemer

About 35 Anston residents know — and they wouldn't trade their slice of rural heaven for anything.

"We've got a nice, quiet little community," says Leland Streckenbach, 59, 2857 Brown County C. "This is the type of place where you know all your neighbors and there's not too much violence."

"People come out here because they want to be a little less governed," he adds. "You have a place to run the dog, a place to put the horses."

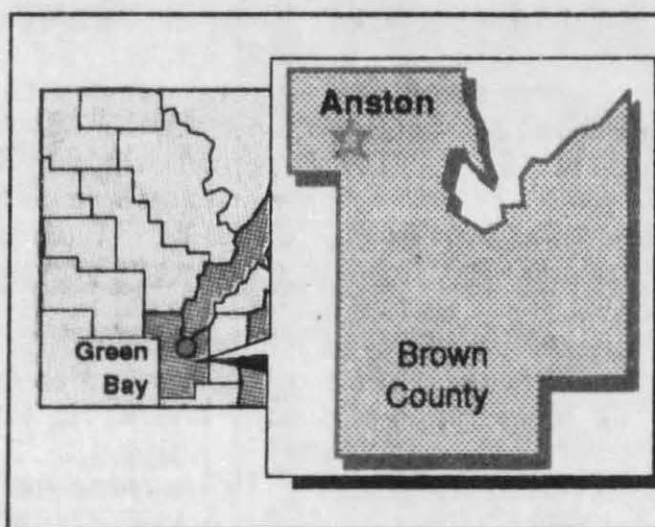
Anston is unincorporated, but very much a part of Pittsfield. For example, Streckenbach is Pittsfield town chairman. Another long-time resident, Lyle "Bob" Buckman, serves as building inspector.

Even such veteran Anstonians have trouble figuring out where their hamlet ends and the next one begins.

"We used to do it by school districts," says Buckman, 71, 4740 Anston Road. "Now everything is included in the Pulaski School District. I don't know how far Anston's boundaries go. But if you blink your eyes, you'll go right through it."

Yet people who live in surrounding communities — Kunesh, Pulaski, Flintville, Suamico — often have strong ties to Anston.

Their ancestors may have attended the



The Anston file

- **Location:** Town of Pittsfield in Brown County, about 20 miles northwest of Green Bay.
- **Population:** About 35 people, according to Pittsfield Chairman Leland Streckenbach.
- **The hub:** Intersection of County C and Anston Road.
- **Known for:** Dairy farming, friendly neighbors, quiet countryside.

now-defunct Anston School, which once had eight grades and a single teacher. Relatives may have worked for one of Anston's formerly thriving businesses — a feed mill, pickle factory, lumber yard, cheese factory, tavern, stockyard, grocery store and sauerkraut factory.

These enterprises closed for one reason or another, so industry in Anston has slowed considerably over the years.

Today, the community has one discount variety store — a branch of White Elephant Stores — and its warehouse, Bay City Supply. Also, there is a large dairy farm run by John and Helen Tauscher and their family.

"Basically speaking, everyone in Anston minds his own business," says Helen Tauscher, 58, 4715 Anston Road. "No one tries to live in your pocket. But when the chips are down, everybody comes out to help."

With pride and good humor, the Tauschers and their neighbors describe Anston's other claims to fame:

- State Rep. Cletus Vanderperren, elected to a record 17 terms, has roots in Anston. The Pittsfield Democrat says his parents, Joseph and Catherine Vanderperren, settled in Anston around 1895. The Vanderperrens owned about 200 acres, which are now part of the Tauscher farm.

- Two Anston boys, Ed Brady and Barry Preslaski, became state wrestling champions in 1982, as part of the Pulaski High School team. A congratulatory message was painted on Anston's abandoned schoolhouse, and remains there.

- Bond Food Products Co. of Oconto started as a pickle factory in Anston, Streckenbach says. The founders stayed with Streckenbach's grandparents while the building was under construction.

- Former Vice President Walter Mondale spent 30 minutes at the Tauscher farm during a Midwest campaign swing.

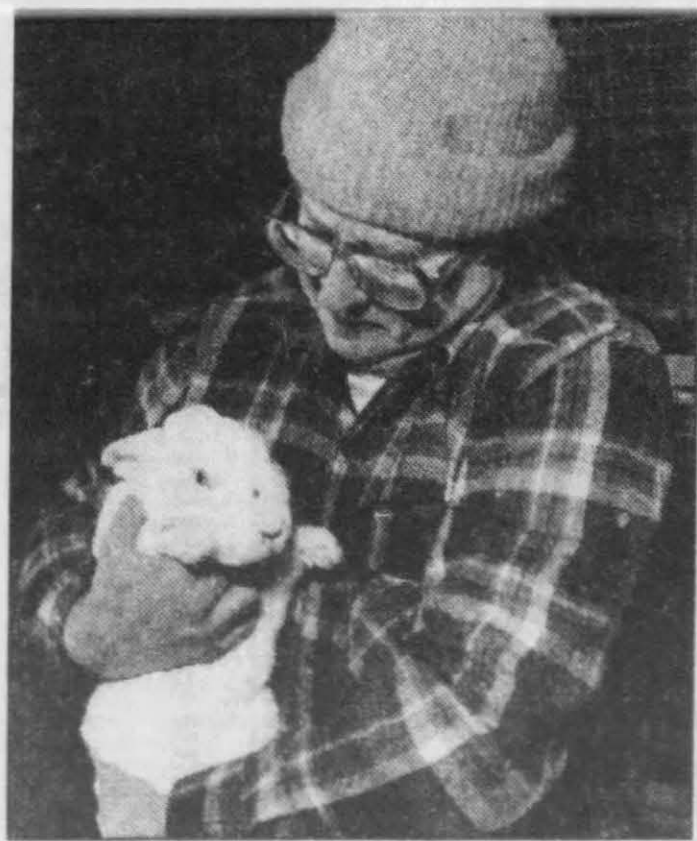
Mondale did not tour the farm, but held an informal press conference in the living room.

- Rumor has it that country music stars, the Oak Ridge Boys, spent an evening in Anston's lone tavern, Irene's Linger Longer, now closed, says Cora Vanderperren, Cletus' wife.

Residents often see bargain hunters stopping at the White Elephant, 4575 Anston Road.

"Anston's not going anywhere, but neither are the people who live here," Streckenbach says. "Some come, some stay. Everyone loves it. We have no desire to move away."

■ **Next week:** Tisch Mills in Kewaunee County



Anston scenes: At top, clerk Julie Kunzer, left, and manager Lynn Naparalla stand in the

White Elephant store. At right, breeder Don Conant holds a New Zealand white rabbit.